

## Developing a Volunteer Program in a Nutshell

*Volunteer administration is a rapidly growing and evolving field. In order to serve the needs of society, volunteer administrators must strategically position themselves for changing audiences and clientele as well as a changing volunteer base. Culp, Deppe, Castillo, & Wells,*

Whether you are just beginning to develop your volunteer program or it has been in existence for years, learning new tools and techniques to manage and develop programs is essential to meet the challenges of new and emerging volunteer concerns. Throughout this handbook, some of those tools have been offered. In this final chapter, a checklist model of development is proposed to assist you in using the techniques, worksheets, and other tools presented in this handbook. Use this model to assess your current volunteer program or to structure a new program.

There is not a definitive system of developing a volunteer program that works best for most organizations. As already stated many times in this handbook, use the tools to design a program that meets the unique needs of your organization and the current administration. The key is flexibility and adaptability to the changes in your environment and the current trends in volunteering. By adapting and making necessary changes, your organization's sustainability will be enhanced with a stable volunteer program.

## Step One: Prepare

- ☐ **Assess** your organization's volunteer needs
  - Go through questions to consider Chapter 1
  - Assess the volunteer & organizational risks Chapter 2
- ☐ **Articulate** your volunteer philosophy Chapter 1
- ☐ **Establish** some policies or guidelines Chapter 1
  - Set up a screening policy Chapter 2
  - Establish job descriptions of needed positions Chapter 5

## Step Two: Recruit

- ☐ **Determine** volunteer trends in our community  
and how you will respond to them (use response  
worksheet) Chapter 3
- ☐ **Formulate** a volunteer recruitment plan Chapter 5
- ☐ **Recruit** using your plan and target audience
  - Use resource database Chapter 5
  - Don't forget to tap into new resources Chapter 4
- ☐ **Utilize** screening policy to select volunteers Chapter 2

## Step Three: Educate

- ☐ **Use** the group cycle Chapter 1
- ☐ **Distribute** volunteer orientation manual Chapter 9
- ☐ **Provide** learning opportunities

## Step Four: Motivate

- ☐ **Understand** individual's motivational needs Chapter 6
- ☐ **Keep** an individual recognition profile Chapter 6
- ☐ **Utilize** preference typing in recognition,  
feedback, conflict Chapter 6, 8

## Step Five: Enhance Volunteer/Staff Relations

- ☐ **Incorporate** ways to meet expectations into program  
Chapter 8
- ☐ **Initiate** training programs to educate staff/volunteers  
Chapter 8
- ☐ **Embrace** conflict/use analysis worksheet to find solutions  
Chapter 8

## Step Six: Evaluate and Restructure

- ☐ **Allow** volunteers a chance to assess themselves  
and to get feedback Chapter 9
- ☐ **Use** feedback, as well as ongoing needs assessments  
to make necessary changes to adapt to volunteer needs,  
organizational growth, and environmental trends Chapter 9

## Conclusion

Volunteerism constitutes a powerful force that contributes greatly to the welfare of our society today. For this reason alone, we should look to the future and develop volunteer programs that offer meaningful roles to our volunteers. As volunteer administrators, we need to learn how to understand the nature of an individual's personal motivation and commitment. By increasing our skills and learning to strategize to meet the changing demographics and trends, we can learn how to meet motivational needs when recruiting; and how to draw from a volunteer's commitment and strengthen it as well.

As we often say in our professional development workshops, “we have no magic wands,” but it is our hope that this handbook offers some useful tools to assist nonprofit organizations find new avenues of meeting the volunteer challenges of tomorrow.

